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TOWARDS AN UNDERSTANDING OF AUTHORITY  
AND ITS RATIONALE IN ORGANIZATIONS.

Dean Robert Capper



TOWARDS AN UNDERSTANDING OF AUTHORITY  
AND  
ITS RATIONALE IN ORGANIZATIONS

by

DEAN ROBERT CAPPER  
Bachelor of Science  
The University of South Carolina, 1966

*A thesis submitted to the  
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of  
The George Washington University  
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Degree of Master of Business Administration*

Thesis directed by  
RICHARD A. BARRETT, M.B.A.  
Associate Professor of Business Administration

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The subject area for this thesis lies within the confines of organization management theory. In the last two or three decades volumes of material have been written, a multitude of ideas and concepts proposed, and an untold number of studies made concerning the true nature of man, the nature of organization, and the interaction of man and organization. Influence by behavioralists, technologists, and administrators in the area of management techniques have been extensive and that influence has not been limited to a select few theorists or practitioners. Organizations, in business, government, and the military, have expended great effort in the direction of implementing these new techniques.

Even with the advances as they are, there still remain large amounts of conflict and significant degrees of turmoil in organizations today. A question, remaining unanswered, is whether the techniques involved are sufficient to keep pace with the rapid changes of social regeneration. Are we headed in the right direction with these revisions? Are these revisions concerned only with techniques or do they reach a depth of comprehension to include the roots of conceptualization pertaining to those techniques?



### Purpose and Utility

It is the purpose of this thesis to explore one of the aspects of organization management--that of authority in the bureaucratic structure. The focus of inquiry in this study is to provide a better understanding of the authority concepts, to provide an overview of its pervasiveness in organization management, and to extend the rationale for it in organizations.

The social and organization revolution which permeates contemporary society has, as alluded to before, affected the methodology of approaching problems. The utility to be derived from such an effort as this thesis is hoped to be evidenced in the provision of a more comprehensive and sophisticated base upon which individual "feelings" on authority can be developed.

The direction herein is the pragmatic approach--to get to the very roots of conception for an all-inclusive, or at least a more complete, understanding of authority.

"It is often necessary to employ very similar collective concepts, indeed often using the same terms, in order to obtain an intelligible terminology."<sup>1</sup> This is very much the case in relation to authority. The definition, content, and theory of authority is interspersed throughout the literature with the terms power, influence, control, etc. One finds considerable difficulty in being able to differentiate between such terms

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<sup>1</sup>Max Weber, Economy and Society, ed. by Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich (New York: Bedminster Press, 1968), p. 14.





both in reading and in thought processes. We can say that such collective concepts are inextricably interwoven as is the present combination of political science, psychology, sociology, anthropology, and other disciplines now so very important to management under the name of behavioral science. In this writer's opinion, knowledge of authority is but another tool for effective administrative practice in organization management. The object then is to further the knowledge of authority with this presentation.

### Scope

It is not the desire of this writer to explore all the possible different disciplinal concepts of authority but to attempt to limit the scope of this paper to those concepts which concern themselves with authority in organizations, especially as it pertains to the furtherance of the management of those organizations. We will particularly be looking at management, organizational theory, and the descriptive aspects of the explicit and implicit ramifications of the various authority structures in organizations. For a comprehensive understanding of the concepts presented we will have to experience a certain amount of "spillover" into other disciplines, such as sociology, psychology, and anthropology, and will indeed spend quite a large amount of time developing our reasoning with a treatise on authority that has its foundations in sociology--specifically, the thoughts of Max Weber. This is to explain however, that the jaunts into the other disciplines are for a reason.



The author hopes not to restrict the scope to just an explanation of authority and the normative view, but to include descriptive and effectual perspectives.

### Methodology of Research and Analysis

It is to be the effort of this paper to take a few of the better, most recognized sources on authority and to study in detail their conceptions as a methodology. To look at all approaches would be not only a difficult task but to attempt it would be impractical.

In fact, within the literature, two basic approaches are evident and the existing gap between the two was criticized by Hopkins in 1961. He noted that organization theory today contains "two different views of systems of bureaucratic authority." In one, which has its source in the writings of Max Weber, such systems are power structures operating in the quasi-judicial fashion: rational values legitimate them, trained experts run them, and the principle of hierarchy, prescribing a positive relation between the rank of a unit and its power, defines their shape. In the other view, developed most fully by Chester I. Barnard, such systems are communication processes. Here they function to appraise decision-makers of relevant matters of fact and to inform those who execute the decisions of their responsibilities. In this conception, neither legitimacy nor hierarchy plays a particularly central role. Both occur, but individual self-interests rather than shared moral commitments provide the main motivations, and the lateral extension of the system in



physical space is more salient than its vertical extension in stratified social space. Hopkins also offers that if the first view suggests the image of a pyramid, the second suggests a wheel, with the lines of communication as so many spokes radiating from the few persons at the organization's center who make the decisions to the many along the outer rim who finally carry the decisions out. In one, then, the outstanding elements are power, hierarchy, legitimacy; in the other, decision-making, communication, and rational self-interest. "Taken together, they comprise the major concepts currently used in the study of bureaucratic authority."<sup>2</sup>

The distinction made by Hopkins in the preceding paragraph has been the basis of analysis for this paper. The writings of Herbert A. Simon are also used in some detail as a parallel to Barnard's concept. This is not to say that the concepts presented were conceived only by Weber, Barnard, or Simon, or even that they conceived the ideas first; but rather, that these three, and the others used for illustrative purposes, presented their ideas clearly and comprehensively.

### ✓ Research Questions

To channel our thinking it seems apropos to spotlight the specific question upon which this research is based: How are the new conceptions of authority affecting the authoritative structure of contemporary organization management?

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<sup>2</sup>Terrence K. Hopkins, "Bureaucratic Authority: The Convergence of Weber and Barnard," in Complex Organizations, ed. Amitai Etzioni (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1961), pp. 82-100.





The next step is to list the subsidiary questions that have to be answered or, at least, addressed in order to attain conclusions related to the research question. These underlying questions pertaining to the subject have been narrowed to four.

First, what are the basic concepts of authority that can be determined from available literature?

Second, is there congruency among the various concepts and are the newer concepts congruent with the older ones?

Third, is there a correspondence between the development of new theoretical concepts and the actions and attitudes prevalent in organization management?

Fourth, what is forecast for the organization of the future and its authority structure?

### Organization of Presentation

The format of this paper follows the line of the research questions.

Chapters II and III are to provide a background of the two basic concepts mentioned under the section on "Methodology." A fundamental problem in the description and subsequent analysis of administrative situations is language. Authority definitions have been used so diversely that it seems necessary to begin this study with a discussion of definitions on authority.

Following the definitions in Chapter II, a regression is made in order to pick up the various premises upon which the concepts of authority have been





extended. Again, the breakdown falls into two categories and these categories seem to follow, respectively, the two basic concepts, presented in detail in Chapter III.

Although Weber is the primary illustrative agent for the classical concept, Cyril O'Donnell's views are added for specificity. Also, in addition to Barnard and Simon on the acceptance concept, a number of other contributors are used to show the pervasiveness of this concept in contemporary writing.

These two chapters provide in essence an answer for the first subsidiary question. Insight into the ways authority concepts are being changed and the congruency or incongruency of the various conceptions, new and old, is offered in Chapter IV with its inspection of the various methods of comparison, analysis approaches, and a reconciliation of the two basic concepts.

Correspondence between the development of new theoretical concepts and the actions and attitudes prevalent today is addressed in the sections on "Attitudes" and "Implementation" in the first part of Chapter V. The question of the future is, in turn, addressed in the latter part of Chapter V with a look at implications and a prognosis of the future as presented by a number of scholars and practitioners in the field.

The final chapter of this study is devoted to drawing such inferences as the preceding materials allow with respect to practical and theoretical problems of authority, implications in terms of the developmental study of authority structures and management techniques, and further areas for research.



## CHAPTER II

### A TREATISE ON AUTHORITY: PART I

#### Definitions of Authority

An embarkation on any formal exposition with authority as a subject immediately thrusts the author into a myriad of definitions which seemingly makes up a semantical quagmire. A survey of written material on authority has disclosed a definite tendency for writers to grope and search for a comprehensive definition. Even though the implications are great, there has been a lack of empirical content and intellectual depth to the concept of managerial authority. Authority is difficult to describe because it is an internal sensation, or a feeling "inside the skin," so to speak.<sup>1</sup> Often authority is defined merely in terms of other words like "right" and "prerogative." On the other hand, it is also regarded by many as if it is something tangible and specific. On considering the differences and making

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<sup>1</sup> Robert J. Daiute, "Managerial Authority in Management Thought," Academy of Management Journal, Volume 33, Number 4 (October, 1968), pp. 66-75



distinctions between authority and power, Hannah Arendt writes:

There exists a silent agreement in most discussions among political and social scientists that we can ignore distinctions and proceed on the assumption that everything can eventually be called anything else, and that distinctions are meaningful only to the extent that each of us has the right to define his terms.<sup>2</sup>

Arendt means that it is necessary to define the terms and assumptions in the particular frame of reference in order to make sure that our maps and territories are the same.

Jerome Hall views authority as a high-level abstraction, and any thorough inquiry into its rules, types, conditions, and functions as no less than a quest for an inclusive philosophy and science of law and politics. Authority is a relational idea and an operative fact that cannot be understood apart from a context in which various reciprocal or correlative notions participate.<sup>3</sup>

Our first definition is basic and lies within the classical theories of authority. The standard definition, according to Koontz and O'Donnell, is: "Legal or rightful power, a right to command or act."<sup>4</sup> It is seen as the basis for responsibility and the binding force in organization. Other related

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<sup>2</sup>Hannah Arendt, "Authority in the Twentieth Century," Review of Politics, October, 1956, pp. 413-414.

<sup>3</sup>Jerome Hall, "Authority and the Law," in Authority, ed. by Carl J. Friedrich (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1958), pp. 58 - 59.

<sup>4</sup>Harold Koontz and Cyril O'Donnell, Principals of Management (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1968), p. 59.



ideas on the concept of "right" or "prerogative" are evidenced by Joseph L. Massie's, "Authority is defined as the right and power to act," and "authority is the formal right to exercise control."<sup>5</sup> Robert Presthus defines authority as the ability to envoke compliance. Unlike power, which is a broader concept with connotations of force and the ability to impose one's will regardless of opposition, authority usually rests upon some official position. He perceives organization as a system of roles graded by authority.<sup>6</sup>

Simon defines authority as the power to make decisions that guide the action of others and he goes on to treat authority in terms of behavior, as something to be comprehended and analyzed in the actions of people, not as an abstract entity. It is a relationship between two individuals, one "superior," the other "subordinate." The superior frames and transmits decisions with the expectation that they will be accepted by the subordinate. The subordinate expects such decisions, and his conduct is determined by them.<sup>7</sup>

Continuing with this line of development the authority definitions can

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<sup>5</sup>Joseph L. Massie, Essentials of Management (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1971), pp. 64 & 146.

<sup>6</sup>Robert Presthus, The Organizational Society (New York: Vintage Books, 1965), pp. 4 & 136-137.

✓<sup>7</sup>Herbert A. Simon, Administrative Behavior (New York: The Macmillian Company, 1957), p. 125.





be expanded more wherein according to Chester I. Barnard authority is:

"the character of a communication (order) in a formal organization by virtue of which it is accepted by a contributor to or a 'member' of the organization as governing the action he contributes."<sup>8</sup> Under this definition the decision as to whether an order has authority or not lies with the persons to whom it is addressed, and does not reside in "persons of authority" or those who issue these orders.

More of the abstract can be seen as presented by Weber when he speaks of power and authority, and imperative control: "Imperative control (authority) is the probability that a command with a specific content (from a given source) will be obeyed by a given group of persons."<sup>9</sup>

Dalton, Barnes, and Zaleznik have managed to capture the aspects of "rights" or "perogatives," acceptance from below, and the abstract in their pervasive and comprehensive definition where authority is held as the commonly accepted right to direct and alter behavior held as a general value judgement in the minds of those who initiate and act upon directives.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Chester I. Barnard, The Functions of the Executive (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1938), p. 163.

<sup>9</sup>Max Weber, The Theory of Social and Economic Organization, trans. by A.M. Henderson and Talcott Parsons (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947), p. 46.

<sup>10</sup>Gene W. Dalton, Louis B. Barnes, and Abraham Zaleznik, The Distribution of Authority in Formal Organizations (Boston: Division of Research, Harvard Business School, 1968), p. 37.



Despite numerous attempts at conceptual clarification and a growing body of empirical inquiries focusing on organizational behavior, Herbert A. Simon could conclude in 1957 that: "there is no consensus today in the management literature as to how the term 'authority' should be used." For Simon, the source of the difficulty lay in the failure of many writers to distinguish between "(1) a specification of the set of behaviors to which they wish to apply the term 'authority'; and (2) a specification of the circumstances under which such behaviors will be exhibited."<sup>11</sup>

While numerous definitions of authority occur in the literature of administration and organization theory, as we have seen, a review reveals considerable variation, vagueness, and ambiguity. An extreme as to the definition of authority lies in an article by Hannah Arendt wherein she asks the question: "What was authority?"<sup>12</sup> Her contention is that authority has vanished from the modern world, and that if we raise the question what authority is, we can no longer fall back upon authentic and undisputable experiences common to all, and indeed, cannot define authority at all.

### Premises

A regression at this point is deemed appropriate. We have looked at a number of definitions and the associated philosophy so that we might give

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<sup>11</sup>Simon, Administrative Behavior, pp. xxxiv-xxxv.

<sup>12</sup>Hannah Arendt, "What Was Authority," in Authority, ed. by Carl J. Friedrich (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1958), pp. 81-112.



some direction to the following discussion. In order to arrive at a comprehensive understanding of authority, conception must have a beginning. This can be in the form of hypotheses, assumptions, rationalizations, analogies, or any of a large number of premises.

Careful review has revealed two basic premises for the development of an authority concept. The first can be characterized in Max Weber's foundation by bases of legitimacy. The second premise is broader, at least in usage, and leans on inherency as its foundation. David Easton strives for "maximum generality" in his hypothesis about authority.<sup>13</sup> A narrower approach is evidenced by Mooney; he restricts Easton's ideas to the organizational setting. Even more specific justifications are given by Simon, Downs, Barnard, and Katz and Kahn.

#### Weber on Legitimacy<sup>14</sup>

Max Weber sought to examine authority in terms of the various sources or bases from which it derived. Ascription of legitimacy to a social order may be provided by tradition, faith, or enactment. The validity of a social order by virtue of the sacredness of tradition is the oldest and most

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<sup>13</sup>David Easton, A Theoretical Approach to Authority, Technical Report No. 17, prepared under contract for the Office of Naval Research, April 1, 1955, p. 4.

<sup>14</sup>Most of the information for the following discussion was gathered from Weber, Economy and Society, passim, pp. 36-215.





universal type of legitimacy. In other words, valid is that which has always been. Legitimacy by faith is an emotional concept and rests on the validity of that which is newly revealed or exemplary. A sub-idea of "value-rational" faith is legitimized with the assumption that valid is that which has been deduced as an absolute. The purest type of legitimacy based on "value-rationality" is "natural law." Positive enactment as a basis of legitimacy is that which is believed to be legal. The most common form of legitimacy is the belief in legality, the compliance with enactments which are formally correct and which have been made in the accustomed manner. Such legality derives from a voluntary agreement of the interested parties.

Weber, next in the development of his conception, turns to the types of legitimate domination. In the context he has made domination synonymous with authority as opposed to using or including every mode of exercising "power" and "influence" over other persons. Here, for the first time, we begin to see the inclusion of individuals or individuality in the concept. Domination was defined as the probability that certain specific commands (or all commands) will be obeyed by a given group of persons.<sup>15</sup> Domination in this sense may be based on the most diverse motives of compliance: all the way from simple habituation to the most purely rational calculations of advantage. Hence, every genuine form of domination implies at least a

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<sup>15</sup>Weber, The Theory of Social and Economic Organization, p. 46.





minimum of voluntary compliance, that is, an interest (based on ulterior motives or genuine acceptance) in obedience.

Not every case of domination makes use of economic means; still less does it always have economic objectives. Normally other elements, affectual and ideal, supplement such interests. In everyday life these relationships, like others, are governed by custom and material calculation of advantage. But custom, personal advantage, purely affectual or ideal motives of solidarity, do not form a sufficiently reliable basis for a given domination. In addition there is normally a further element, the belief in legitimacy.

Experience shows that in no instance does domination voluntarily limit itself to the appeal to material or affectual or ideal motives as a basis for its continuance. In addition every such system attempts to establish and to cultivate the belief in its legitimacy. But according to the kind of legitimacy which is claimed, the type of obedience, the kind of administrative staff developed to guarantee it, and the mode of exercising authority, will all differ fundamentally. Equally fundamental is the variation in effect. Hence, it is useful to classify the types of domination according to the kind of claim to legitimacy typically made by each.

There are three pure types of legitimate domination. The validity of the claims to legitimacy may be based on:

1. Rational grounds—resting on a belief in the legality of enacted rules and the right of those elevated to authority under such rules to issue commands (legal authority);



2. Traditional grounds—resting on an established belief in the sanctity of immemorial traditions and the legitimacy of those exercising authority under them (traditional authority); or finally,

3. Charismatic grounds—resting on devotion to the exceptional sanctity, heroism or exemplary character of an individual person, and of the normative patterns or order revealed or ordained by him (charismatic authority).<sup>16</sup>

### David Easton's Hypothesis

The major hypothesis of an essay by David Easton is that: ". . . no society, at any time or place, can maintain itself without the presence of authority relationships."<sup>17</sup> Assuming then, that society is to maintain itself, what are the minimum conditions or needs that must be satisfied by the variable structure and processes that we find historically in all societies? The question itself is plain enough, but within it are certain critical assumptions. The question assumes that for every society there is an environment in which it exists, for no system of human activity can maintain itself in a social, biological, and physical vacuum; that if a system is to maintain itself in a given environment, certain kinds of activities, called minimum conditions or needs of the system, must take place; and that structures within the system do not vary at random but stand in a determinate relation to the needs of the system. Authority is, therefore, a needed

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<sup>16</sup>Weber, Economy and Society, p. 215.

<sup>17</sup>Easton, A Theoretical Approach to Authority, pp. 2-16.



condition for the coordination of the functional requirements of an integrated society.

### Justification by Mooney

The premise of inherency is further established in the organizational setting by James D. Mooney in his Principles of Organization. Organization, according to Mooney, in a formal sense means order and is as old as human society itself. There is a natural urge and necessity to band together and men draw strength, courage, and inspiration from this presence together. He states a universality of organization as a phenomenon and the psychics of organization as growing out of a common interest and combined effort.<sup>18</sup> When any group combines for a given purpose, even if only two persons, we have the basic psychic fundamentals of organization.

Mooney stated the case for authority in terms of results, that is, the need for coordination in each business organization. According to Mooney, the coordinative principle is the descriptive and normative principle under which all other organization principles are subsumed.<sup>19</sup> If the organization is to gain its external purpose, it must achieve its internal purpose of coordinating its parts.

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<sup>18</sup>James D. Mooney, The Principles of Organization (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1947), p. ix.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 4.



As coordination is the all-inclusive principle of organization, it must have its own principle and foundation in authority, or the "supreme coordinating power."<sup>20</sup> Always, in every form of organization, this supreme coordinating power must rest somewhere, else there will be no directive for coordinated effort.

One of the two main subprinciples by Mooney is the scalar principle. The scalar principle refers to how activities are coordinated on the vertical plane of the formal organization. Mooney maintained that authority is an essential part of the process of coordination on the vertical plane. Aside from the charismatic qualities of leadership, effective leadership is characterized by the proper use of authority to establish a synchronized division of labor on the vertical plane. Whatever the ultimate source of authority, it is necessary for an organization to have a means for initiating the process of delegation of authority.

Simons, Downs, Barnard, and Katz and Kahn

The administrative organization is characterized by specialization. This specialization may take the form of a "vertical"<sup>21</sup> division of labor. A pyramid or hierarchy of authority may be established and decision-making functions may be specialized among the members of this hierarchy.

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<sup>20</sup>Ibid., pp. 6-8.

<sup>21</sup>Simon, Administrative Behavior, p. 9.





There would seem to be at least three reasons for vertical specialization in organization. First, if there is any horizontal specialization, vertical specialization is absolutely essential to achieve coordination among the operative employees. Second, just as horizontal specialization permits greater skill and expertise to be developed by the operative group in the performance of their tasks, so vertical specialization permits greater expertise in the making of decisions. Third, vertical specialization permits the operative personnel to be held accountable for their decisions—maintenance of responsibility.

Anthony Downs<sup>22</sup> proposes that if all the inconsistencies arising within an organization were allowed to flourish unchecked, the overall impact of any organizational efforts would be seriously diminished—if not destroyed—because the actions of some members would offset those of others. To avoid this outcome, some mechanism must be created for setting conflicts; that is, adjusting inconsistent behavior patterns among the organization members to an acceptable level of complementarity.

This mechanism can take the form of: (1) entrusting conflict-settling authority to certain persons in the organization; (2) use of some rule based upon the assumption that everyone involved has equal authority (such as majority rule); or (3) reference to some traditional set of behavioral rules considered by all to be binding. The use of traditional rules implies that

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<sup>22</sup>Anthony Downs, Inside Bureaucracy (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1967), p. 51.



one of the first two mechanisms must also exist to settle disputes about current application of these rules. Therefore, one of the first two mechanisms is necessary to any large organization.

From this relatively simple exercise of logic Downs derived his Law of Hierarchy: "Coordination of large-scale activities without markets requires a hierarchial authority structure."<sup>23</sup> This law results directly from the limited capacity of each individual, plus the existence of ineradicable sources of conflict among individuals.

The inherency idea is probably expressed most succinctly in the following quote by Chester I. Barnard:

If it is true that all complex organizations consist of aggregations of unit organizations and have grown only from unit organizations, we may reasonably postulate that whatever the nature of authority, it is inherent in the simple organization unit; and that a correct theory of authority must be consistent with what is essentially true of these units or organization. We shall, therefore, regard the observations which we can make of the actual conditions as at first a source for discovering what is essential in elementary and simple organizations.<sup>24</sup>

Barnard also states that authority is but another name for the willingness and capacity of individuals to submit to the necessities of cooperative systems. Authority arises from the technological and social limitations of cooperative systems on one hand, and of individuals on the other.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 265.

<sup>24</sup>Barnard, The Functions of the Executive, p. 101.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 184.



Katz and Kahn offer a logic for authority as a requirement for the "Reduction in Human Variability" and questions of "Obedience and Disobedience" within organizations.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Daniel Katz and Robert L. Kahn, The Social Psychology of Organizations (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1966), pp. 199-206.



### CHAPTER III

#### A TREATISE ON AUTHORITY: PART II

We have listed and discussed several definitions of authority and examined the basic premises by which it can be justified. The next step is to view the concepts of authority which are prevalent today and have been prevalent in recent history. There are two paths of thought along which authority as a concept can be followed. The older, classical authority concept has been exemplified best by the works of Max Weber. A newer, modern theory, that of acceptance, has taken the forefront and has by far received the most exposure in recent years throughout the literature.

#### ✓ Classical Concepts<sup>1</sup>

In explanation of Weber's topology it will be consistent to look at each of what Weber calls the "three pure types of authority."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Most of the information for the following discussion on classical concepts was gathered from Weber, Economy and Society, passim, pp. 227-265.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 215.





### ✓ Legal-Rational Authority

Legal authority rests on the acceptance of the validity of the following mutually inter-dependent ideas.)

1. That any given legal norm may be established by agreement or by imposition, on grounds of expediency or value-rationality or both, with a claim to obedience at least on the part of the members of the organization. This is, however, usually extended to include all persons within the sphere of power in question who stand in certain social relationships or carry out forms of social action which in the order governing the organization have been declared to be relevant.

2. That every body of law consists essentially of a consistent system of abstract rules which have normally been intentionally established. Furthermore, administration of law is held to consist in the application of these rules to particular cases; the administrative process in the rational pursuit of the interests which are specified in the order governing the organization within the limits laid down by legal precept; and following principles which are capable of generalized formulation and are approved in the order governing the group, or at least not disapproved in it.

3. That the typical person in authority, the 'superior,' is himself subject to an impersonal order by orienting his actions to it in his own dispositions and commands.

4. That the person who obeys authority does so, as it is usually viewed, only in his capacity as a 'member' of the organization and what he obeys is only the law.

5. It is held that the members of the organization, insofar as they obey a person in authority, do not owe this obedience to him as an individual, but to the impersonal order. This reasoning assumes a rationally delimited jurisdiction.<sup>3</sup>

The fundamental categories of legal-rational authority lie in: the continuous rule-bound conduct of official business; a specified sphere of jurisdiction which involves a systematic division of labor, the provision of

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 217-218.



power for the incumbants within the division, and the ways and means of compulsion being defined; an organization of offices that follow the principle of hierarchy, that is, each lower office is under the control and supervision of a higher one wherein there is a right of appeal and a statement of grievances from the lower to higher; the selection of a person for the administrative staff or eligibility for appointment to official position by demonstrated qualifications through training of the rules or norms that regulate the conduct of that office; the principle that the members of the administrative staff should be completely separated from ownership of the means of production or administration and in turn can be held accountable for their use; the complete absence of appropriation of an official by the incumbent so that the office can be oriented on to the relevant norms, as in the case of judges; the formulation and recording in writing of administrative acts, decisions, and rules even in cases where oral discussion is the norm or is even mandatory. The purest type of exercise of legal authority is that which employs a bureaucratic administrative staff.

### Traditional Authority

Weber calls authority traditional if legitimacy is claimed for it and believed in by virtue of the sanctity of age-old rules and powers. The masters are designated according to traditional rules and are obeyed because of their traditional status. This type of organized rule is, in the simplest case,



primarily based on personal loyalty which results from common upbringing. The person exercising authority is not a "superior," but a personal master, his administrative staff does not consist mainly of officials but of personal retainers, and the ruled are not "members" of an association but are either his traditional "comrades" or his "subjects." Personal loyalty, not the official's impersonal duty, determines the relations of the administrative staff to the master.

Obedience is owed not to enacted rules but to the person who occupies a position of authority by tradition or who has been chosen for it by the traditional master. The commands of such a person are legitimized in one of two ways:

- partly in terms of traditions which themselves directly determine the content of the command and are believed to be valid within certain limits that cannot be overstepped without endangering the master's traditional status; and
- partly in terms of the master's discretion in that sphere which tradition leaves open to him, this traditional prerogative rests primarily on the fact that the obligations of personal obedience tend to be essentially unlimited.

Thus there is a double sphere: that of action which is bound to specific traditions; and, that of action which is free of specific rules. In the latter sphere, the master is free to do good turns on the basis of his personal pleasure and likes. So far as his action follows principles at all, these are





governed by considerations of ethical common sense, of equity or of utilitarian expediency. They are not formal principles, as in the case of legal authority. The exercise of power is oriented toward the consideration of how far master and staff can go in view of the subjects' traditional compliance without arousing their resistance. When resistance occurs, it is directed against the master or his servant personally, the accusation being that he failed to observe the traditional limits of his power.

In Japan, the authority of the emperor was based upon a long tradition of belief in his direct descent from heaven, "son of heaven," and the person of the emperor was considered the sole source of ultimate authority in the country.

### Charismatic Authority

The term "charisma," according to Weber, will be applied to a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is considered extraordinary and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities. These are such as are not accredible to the ordinary person, but are regarded as of devine origin or as exemplary, and on the basis of them the individual concerned is termed as a "leader." How the qualities are judged is not important, but what is important is how the individual is actually regarded by those subject to charismatic authority, his "followers" or "disciples."





Since it is "extra-ordinary," charismatic authority is sharply opposed to rational and traditional authority. Legal authority is specifically rational in the sense of being bound to intellectually analyzable rules; while charismatic authority is specifically irrational in the sense of being foreign to all rules. Traditional authority is bound to the precedents handed down from the past and to this extent is also oriented to rules. The only basis of legitimacy for charismatic authority is personal charisma so long as it is proved; that is, as long as it receives recognition.

#### Combinations of the Pure Types

Organizations which belong only to one or another of these pure types are very exceptional. In general, it should be kept clearly in mind that the basis of every authority, and correspondingly of every kind of willingness to obey, is a belief, a belief by virtue of which persons exercising authority are lent prestige. The composition of this belief is seldom altogether simple. In the case of "legal authority," it is never purely legal. The belief in legality comes to be established and habitual, and this means it is partly traditional. Furthermore, it has a charismatic element, at least in the negative sense that persistent and striking lack of success may be sufficient to ruin any administrative body, to undermine its prestige, and to prepare the way for charismatic "revolution."

Groups approximating the purely traditional type have certainly existed.



But, they have never been stable indefinitely and, as is also true of legal authority, have seldom been without a head who had a personally charismatic status by heredity or office. Under certain circumstances, the charismatic chief can be different from the traditional or legal one.

Similarly, entirely pure charismatic authority is rare. It is not impossible, as in the case of Napoleon, for the strictest type of bureaucracy to issue directly from a charismatic movement. Hence, as expressed by Weber:

. . . the kind of terminology and classification set forth above has in no sense the aim to be exhaustive or to confine the whole of historical reality in a rigid schema. Its usefulness is derived from the fact that in a given case it is possible to distinguish what aspects of a given organized group can be attributed as falling under or approximating one or another of these categories.<sup>4</sup>

#### O'Donnell and the Classical

In a more restricted sense, Cyril O'Donnell views authority from a classicist's preception. He sees authority as a right to regimen action of others conferred on managers by an external source. The proximate source as he sees it is the law of contract. This has its genesis in the natural law and the natural rights of man. The business manager derives his prerogatives from the business owners who have the legal right to use their property as they wish. And an employee incurs the obligation to obey orders as a condition of employment when he agrees to the employment

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 263.



contract. The state is the tool man has created to develop and confirm natural law and part of the system thus contrived by "right reason" is the law of contract which establishes the right of the manager to command and the duty of a subordinate to obey.<sup>5</sup>

### Acceptance Concepts

The primary point of departure between the classical concepts just reviewed, ala Weber, and our present analysis of the acceptance theories of authority lies in the fact that the acceptance theories attempt to state empirical propositions about the circumstances under which authority will be accepted, and the motivations causing that acceptance as opposed to a specification of a set of behaviors by which "authority" can be defined. It is generally held that the pioneer proponents of the acceptance theory of authority in management are Chester I. Barnard and Herbert A. Simon.

#### Chester I. Barnard

Barnard's definition of authority designates a subordinates acceptance as the determinate factor in authority relationships. Here he departs from tradition. He presents this point of view as a practical observation without reference to any ethical imperatives or ideology. He notes the obvious fact that authority is frequently ineffective and that violations are actually accepted

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<sup>5</sup>Cyril O'Donnell, "The Source of Managerial Authority," Political Science Quarterly, Volume 47, Number 4 (December, 1952), 583-588.





as a matter of course. In this light, Barnard sees the effective use of authority as a tool in managing. Use of this tool is predicated on an understanding whereby authority is brought into being by its acceptance. Without acceptance, authority is non-existent.

In substantiating his definition, Barnard offers four criteria which must simultaneously be met before a person can and will accept a communication as authoritative:

1. He can and does understand the communication;
2. At the time of his decision he believes that it is not inconsistent with the purpose of the organization;
3. At the time of his decision, he believes it to be compatible with his personal interest as a whole; and
4. He is able mentally and physically to comply.<sup>6</sup>

In other words, a communication that cannot be understood can have no authority. Until orders are interpreted they have no meaning. The recipient must either disregard them or merely do anything in the hope that that is compliance. A communication believed by the recipient to be incompatible with the purpose of the organization, as he understands it, could not be accepted. Action would be frustrated by cross purposes as it is in a conflict of orders. If a communication is believed to involve a burden that destroys the net advantage of connection with the organization, there no longer would remain a net inducement to the individual to contribute to it. "The existence of a net inducement is the only reason for accepting any

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<sup>6</sup>Barnard, The Functions of the Executive, p. 165.





order as having authority."<sup>7</sup> If a person is unable to comply with an order, obviously it must be disobeyed or disregarded.

In pursuing this reasoning, Barnard offers a set of conditions under which cooperation is effected. Orders are normally issued in such a way that they usually comply with the four criteria. There exists a "zone of indifference" in each individual within which orders are acceptable without conscious questioning of their authority. And there is a certain stability of this "zone of indifference" due to pressures inherent in the interests of the group, i. e., group opinion.

#### Herbert A. Simon

Upon examination we can see that the views of Simon and Barnard very closely parallel each other. A difference lies in Simon's emphasis on the fact that authority involves behaviors in the part of both the superior and the subordinate, and that a relationship exists only when both behaviors occur. He sees the behavior pattern of the superior involving an imperative statement concerning the behavior of the subordinate and an expectation that it will be accepted by the subordinate, completing the relationship. It involves the subordinate holding abeyant his critical faculties for choosing alternatives and the acceptance of the received command as the final criterion of choice. The critical variable in this relationship is the act of acceptance.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 166.

<sup>8</sup>Simon, Administrative Behavior, passim, chap. v.



{ A subordinate is said to accept authority whenever he permits his behavior to be guided by the decision of a superior, without independently examining the merits of that decision. When exercising authority, the superior does not seek to convince the subordinate, but only to obtain his acquiescence. In actual practice authority is usually liberally admixed with suggestion and persuasion. }

Simon believes that although it is an important function of authority to permit a decision to be made and carried out even when agreement cannot be reached, perhaps this arbitrary aspect of authority has been over-emphasized. "If it is attempted to carry authority beyond a certain point, which may be described as the subordinates' 'zone of acceptance,' disobedience will follow."<sup>9</sup> The magnitude of the zone of acceptance depends upon the sanctions which authority has available to enforce its commands. The term "sanctions" must be interpreted broadly in this connection, for positive and neutral stimuli are at least as important in securing acceptance of authority as the threat of physical or economic punishment.

{ An additional widening of the acceptance concept is displayed by Simon's use of authority operating "upward" and "sidewise" as well as "downward" in an organization. If an executive delegates to his secretary a decision about file cabinets and accepts her recommendations without reexamination of its merits, he is accepting her authority. The "lines of authority" represented on organizational charts do have a special significance, however,

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 11.

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for they are commonly resorted to in order to terminate debate when it proves impossible to reach a consensus on a particular decision. Since this appellate use of authority generally requires sanctions to be effective, the structure of formal authority in an organization usually is related to the appointment, disciplining, and dismissal of personnel. These formal lines of authority are commonly supplemented by informal authority relations in the day-to-day work of the organization, while the formal hierarchy is largely reserved for the settlement of disputes.<sup>10</sup>

The central thesis, then, of both Barnard and Simon would seem to be that authority in practical management operations is a variable, not an absolute. It is not an abstraction, but is a dimension—perhaps the principal one—in interrelationships between people in formal organizations.

### Others on Acceptance

The acceptance theory has been rather persuasive in recent writings as was mentioned before. George C. Homans found that [to have authority it is not means enough that a man should give orders to others. He must give orders that they will obey, and the process by which obedience to orders is secured is not a simple one. "The ability to carry the followers with him is the source of any leader's authority." To be sure, he leans upon them for his authority.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>11</sup>George C. Homans, The Human Group (New York: Harcourt Brace Publishers, 1950), pp. 117 & 171.





"Authority in a big organization is essentially a matter of consent," according to Robert Presthus, "depending upon the acceptance of those who are subject to it."<sup>12</sup> This view must be qualified, says Presthus, mainly because it fails to ask why authority is accepted. He asserts that when this question is asked, the problems of learned deference to authority, to influence, and to sanctions are raised, and the motives for "acceptance" become clearer.

Obviously, individuals "accept" authority for many reasons and many possible reactions exist, ranging from eager cooperation to reluctant obedience. Confronted with an order, the average individual will estimate the consequences of various alternatives and adopt the one that seems in his own interest, insofar as he is able to identify it. In this restricted sense, authority is no doubt "accepted." But to suggest as this thesis does that it is commonly within the individual's range of discretion either to accept or to reject is misleading. Rejection is usually impractical. Moreover, such a view fails to recognize the propensity to obey induced by socialization and by hierarchy, both of which tend to institutionalize obedience and to redefine "acceptance" by creating an expectation of compliance.<sup>13</sup>

Anthony Downs in his recently published book Inside Bureaucracy, expounds somewhat on the terminology offered by Simon and Barnard to

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<sup>12</sup>Presthus, The Organizational Society, p. 43.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., pp. 43-45.





Simon's "zone of acceptance" and Barnard's "zone of indifference" he adds an additional dimension—"zone of participation."<sup>14</sup> Although the three terms are almost synonymous in nature, they do, upon close scrutiny, reveal a different attitude existing within the subordinate in each case. There is a variation in the possible connotations.

More insight into the scope of acceptance is evidenced by the following from Bendix. The idea that authority exists only when accepted is, however, not considered to imply necessarily that it arises from the bottom of any organization in percolator fashion. In reality the nature of economic process is such that wherever business enterprises are established a few within the organization command and many obey. The basic social relationship in any business organization is that between the employees who direct and lead and the workers who acquiesce, or follow.<sup>15</sup> The fact that this is an independent relationship resting on acceptance by subordinates does not mean that organizations become egalitarian in status arrangements, nor does it mean that a hierarchical structure for downward passage of authoritative communications is not essential for effective organization locomotion toward objectives.

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<sup>14</sup>Downs, Inside Bureaucracy, pp. 62-63.

<sup>15</sup>R. Bendix, Work and Authority in Industry (New York: Wiley & Sons, 1956), pp. 2 & 13.



## CHAPTER IV

### CURRENT INTERPRETATIONS AND MANIFESTATIONS OF AUTHORITY

We have delved deeply into two basic authority concepts, identified as "classical" and "acceptance" by this writer, in order to provide a foundation upon which to expound and expand. Inevitably, there have been a number of attempts to subsume, reconcile, or cut across these two broad theories of authority. The attempts normally involve some sort of a "mix" of the various definitions, premises, and concepts presented in the preceeding two chapters. Most, however, have found little support and have remained isolated intellectual ventures.

The greater portion of this chapter will be devoted to a review of several such attempts, to see how the theories are manifested in literature and organizations today. A brief reconciliation of the classical and acceptance concepts will then provide a conclusion for this segment of the thesis.



## Methods of Comparison

### Formal and Informal Authority

Procedural coordination in organization--the specification of the lines of authority, and the spheres of activity and authority of each organization member--creates a formal organization, a set of abstract, more or less permanent relations that govern the behavior of each participant. Formal groups are created in order to fulfill specific goals and carry on specific tasks which are clearly related to the total organizational mission.) Simon speaks of two ways in which authority enters into this "formal" organization. "First the authority of those individuals who exercise control over the group is employed to establish and enforce the scheme of formal organization; second, the scheme of formal organization itself prescribes the lines of authority and division of work that shall be followed in carrying out the work of the organization."<sup>1</sup>)

Surendra Singhvi has attributed a classification of authority to formal organization--formal authority. As an example, he offers, an individual is promoted to a higher position because of his seniority. He has authority because of his new position, and not necessarily due to his ability, knowledge, and skill. It is often recognized that though the officer may be of limited personal ability, his advice may be superior solely by reason of the advantage

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<sup>1</sup>Simon, Administrative Behavior, pp. 147-148.



of his position. This type of authority is a formal sanction from the top person in the organizational hierarchy.<sup>2</sup>

The formal scheme of organization will always differ from the organization as it actually operates. The members of organizations are formally called upon to provide only certain activities to fulfill their or organizational roles.

Because the whole man actually reports for work or joins the organization and because man has needs beyond the minimum ones of doing his job, he will seek fulfillment of some of these needs through developing a variety of relationships with other members of the organization.<sup>3</sup>

Because of these relationships the actual organization may operate in contradiction to the specifications or exhibit actions not specified in the formal scheme. The term "informal" organization refers to the interpersonal relations in the organization that affect decisions within it but either are omitted from or are not consistent with that formal scheme.

To this informal organization Singhvi attributes "informal authority." In this attribution he also expands the idea to include an "authority of leadership."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Surendra S. Singhvi, "Authority and Power," SAM Advanced Management Journal, Volume 34, Number 3 (June, 1969), p. 66.

<sup>3</sup>Edgar H. Schein, Organizational Psychology (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1965), p. 68.

<sup>4</sup>Singhvi, "Authority and Power," p. 66.





## Internal and External

The terms internal and external when associated with authority have come to carry several different connotations. Under examination, however, the same pattern of thought is evident wherein we see the differences existing only in the relative uses of the two terms. According to Simon, two aspects of influence may be distinguished: The stimuli with which the organization seeks to influence the individual; and the psychological "set" of the individual, which determines his response to the stimuli. These may be termed the "external" and "internal" aspects of influence, respectively.<sup>5</sup>

Talcott Parsons takes the same terms and applies them to society and to its subsystems and institutions.<sup>6</sup> When the whole ramified structure of institutions in a society and its subsystems is looked at, there is a differentiated hierarchy of permissions, prescriptions, and prohibitions such that the higher level prescribes the limits within which the lower and more differentiated ones may operate. For any given subsystem the relation may be conveniently stated in terms of what is often referred to as the distinction between the "external" and the "internal" system.<sup>7</sup>

Another use of the relationship between the terms is offered in argument

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<sup>5</sup>Simon, Administrative Behavior, p. 123.

<sup>6</sup>Talcott Parsons, "Authority, Legitimation, and Political Action," in Authority, ed. by Friedrich, p. 217.

<sup>7</sup>See Homans, The Human Group, for a convenient delineation of this distinction.



to the following quotation: "All authoritative communications . . . have no meaning to those whose actions are not included with the cooperative system."<sup>8</sup>

This writer believes that such a statement is restricted to the internal system and that in the qualitative sense that authority (authoritative communications) has influence and therefore meaning to those of an external system or subsystem.<sup>9</sup>

### The Employment Contract

The premise of the "zone of acceptance, participation, etc." lies in some sort of contractual relationship that exists between the interacting parties.

This "contract" is also evident in the classical concept by way of expectations, customs, and norms. "Contracts" may be in concrete or abstract forms.

Authority, as conceived by Parsons, is a category of institutionalization and as such is cognate with a category like contract. In a society with a widely ramified division of labor there is an immense network of continually shifting contractual arrangements.

The terms of these arrangements are settled 'ad hoc' in each particular case by agreement of the parties. But in the concrete structure of the social relation involved in a contractual relation there is more than the 'ad hoc' agreement.<sup>10</sup>

Parsons is speaking of socially defined norms and expectations, of the means

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<sup>8</sup>Barnard, The Functions of the Executive, p. 173.

<sup>9</sup>The difference between quantitative and qualitative will be discussed in Chapter VI.

<sup>10</sup>Parsons, "Authority, Legitimation, and Political Action," p. 204.



employed in gaining consent, and how outside interests might affect the agreement. Norms and expectations on this more general level underlie any particular contract.

Acceptance of authority is in effect a key clause in the psychological contract in terms of which each new member accepts membership and enters the organization. The notion of a psychological contract implies that the individual has a variety of expectations of the organization and that the organization has a variety of expectations of him. The expectations not only cover how much work is to be performed for how much pay, but also involve the whole pattern of rights, privileges, and obligations between worker and organization.<sup>11</sup>

The actual interaction between the worker and the organization can be thought of as the working out of a psychological contract through what H. Levinson has called the process of reciprocation, whereby the terms of a inducement-contribution ratio are converted into motivational units, usually of an unconscious kind.<sup>12</sup>

( Line and Staff )

There is an inherent tension in organization between those in hierarchical positions of authority and those who play specialized roles.

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<sup>11</sup>Schein, Organizational Psychology, pp. 10-12.

<sup>12</sup>Warren G. Bennis, "Organizational Developments and the Fate of Bureaucracy," in Readings in Organizational Behavior and Human Performance, ed. by L. L. Cummings and W. E. Scott, Jr. (Homewood, Ill.: Richard D. Irwin, Inc., 1969), p. 439.





Each feels that his role is more essential to the organization. There is conflict in the fact that those in hierarchical roles have appropriated to themselves the definitions of success in our society. The specialist normally resents the fact that he must go to a nonspecialist administrator to secure the resources necessary to carry out his technical work. Authority based on hierarchy takes precedence over that based on knowledge. Ordinarily hierarchical refers to line and specialist to staff.<sup>13</sup> It is thus often stated that staff officers are assigned an "authority of ideas" and line officers an "authority to command."<sup>14</sup> Similar ideas have been expressed as "authority of man" and "authority of ideas,"<sup>15</sup> or as "authority of action" and "authority of knowledge."

#### ( Positional vs Professional Authority )

Another method of comparison distinguishes among types of authority in modern organizations, centering on the distinction between positional and professional authority. This method very closely parallels the discussion on line and staff and reconciles it with the employment contract.

Positional authority arises from the implicit or explicit agreement

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<sup>13</sup>Koontz and O'Donnell, Principles of Management, pp. 295-301.

<sup>14</sup>E. Peterson and E.G. Plowman, Business Organization and Management, rev. ed. (Homewood, Ill.: Richard D. Irwin, Inc., 1948), p. 259.

<sup>15</sup>Mooney, The Principles of Organization, p. 34.





among members of an organization to designate the rights of individuals to direct the activities of others within prescribed limits. When a person joins an organization, he anticipates that he will receive direction from persons designated as superiors in the organizational hierarchy. It is a part of the employment contract. Partly as a means of supporting this authority, the holders of given positions are granted the right to dispense certain organizational rewards and punishments, such as dismissal, remuneration and promotion.<sup>16</sup>

Professional authority usually arises from the needs of formal organizations for application of specialized knowledge and expertise (hence, the staff). The use of professional authority depends on the recognition that an individual possesses relevant expertise gained through education. The potential punishment in professional authority is the capacity to withhold help and lessened ability to solve problems or to perform tasks effectively. The organizational rewards and punishments are affected indirectly and, thus, the effect is one step removed.<sup>17</sup>

Barnard discusses authority of position in much the same light as above but adds a new dimension in his "authority of leadership." The ideas of staff and professional authority lean towards charismatic authority. However,

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<sup>16</sup>Dalton, Barnes, and Zaleznik, The Distribution of Authority in Formal Organizations, pp. 148-149.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.



authority of leadership approaches the "pure" much closer. "It is obvious that some men have superior ability. Their knowledge and understanding regardless of position command respect. Men impute authority to what they say in an organization for this reason only."<sup>18</sup>

### { Centralized and Rationalized Authority }

One of the most recent methods of comparison has been presented by Marshall W. Meyer. His { "centralized authority" in concomitant with functional differentiation or the horizontal division of labor within a bureaucratic organization. "Rationalized authority" is, conversely, concomitant with hierarchical differentiation or the vertical divisions of labor. }

In the pattern of centralized authority, the top manager or managers are important in the ordinary operations of the bureaucracy. Not only does top management make policy where authority is centralized, but it also translates the generalities of policy into the specifics of commands. . . . Where rationalized authority prevails, there is a clear separation between those who decide on goals and those who translate them into commands.<sup>19</sup>

{ Rationality is used in the sense that lower level managers make decisions rationally according to principles elaborated by their superiors. }

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<sup>18</sup>Barnard, The Functions of the Executive, pp. 173-175.

<sup>19</sup>Marshall W. Meyer, "Two Authority Structures of Bureaucratic Organizations," Administrative Science Quarterly, September, 1968, p. 226.



Potpourri

## Unity of Command

No man can serve two masters:  
for either he will hate the one, and love the other;  
or else he will hold to one, and despise the other.

*Matthew 6:24*

Herein lies the principle of unity of command, so old and so universal that to trace its origin would be nearly impossible. The principle of unity of command and direction states that for any action an employee should receive orders from one superior only, and that there should be only one leader and one plan for a group of activities having the same objective. The essence of this principle is that an organizational structure should make it impossible for a member to be caught in the crossfire of incompatible orders or incompatible expectations from two or more supervisors. Simon points out that the validity of this principle is questionable on the grounds that it does not give any reason why an individual cannot accept certain decisional premises from one superior and other non-conflicting premises from another.<sup>20</sup>

Robert House in series of recent studies concluded that violations of the principles of unity of command and chain-of-command frequently result in role conflict, which may have undesirable consequences in organizations.

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<sup>20</sup> Simon, Administrative Behavior, pp. 140-147.



However, he also shows that in some circumstances conflict may be the lesser evil.<sup>21</sup>

### Circular Flow of Influence

What brings about obedience by a subordinate? Robert Guest's study of organizational change led him to conclude that, in fact, there is a two-way or circular process of influence taking place. Its not a matter of influence being exerted just downward. Not attitudes of the subordinate, but actual performance by the supra-ordinate determines whether the subordinate will carry out orders. The subordinate must find that his wishes and interests are being transmitted upward by his immediate supervisor, as a condition of acceptance by the subordinate of downward flowing orders.<sup>22</sup>

### The Last-word

In the situations that have been discussed, a subordinate accepts command either in the absence of a determinate choice of his own or in conjunction with a determinate choice with which he agrees. But a subordinate may also accept a command in opposition to a determinate choice of his own.

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<sup>21</sup>Robert J. House, "Role Conflict and Multiple Authority in Complex Organizations," California Management Review, Volume XII, Number 4 (Summer, 1970), pp. 53-60.

<sup>22</sup>Robert Guest, Organizational Change (Homewood, Ill.: Richard D. Irwin, Inc., 1962), p. 118.





When there is a disagreement between two persons, and when the disagreement is not resolved by discussion, persuasion, or other means of conviction, then it must be decided by the authority of one or the other participant. It is this "right to the last word" which is usually meant in speaking of "lines of authority" in an organization.<sup>23</sup>

### Rationality in Behavior

It is important to note that propositions about human behavior, in so far as it is rational, do not ordinarily involve propositions about the psychology of the person who is behaving. Hence, psychological propositions are needed only to explain why his behavior departs from the norms of rationality.

Judging the rationality of response to changes in the organization structure requires an assessment of alterations in the proportional distributions of authority. If change decreases an individual's proportional amount of authority, then it is rational for him to experience the shift as a deprivation and to resist the change through individual and collective action. Resistance in such a case is no less rational than the justification for the change as a means of improving the organization's effectiveness. There is no basis for assigning a higher value to rationality at the level of the

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<sup>23</sup>Simon, Administrative Behavior, pp. 129-130



organization than at the level of the individual. In fact, rationality at the level of individual response has a quality of concreteness not present in assessing rationality at the level of organization.<sup>24</sup>

An interesting aside on the views of rationality as concerns the acceptance concept has been presented by Stegner. "One of the most striking features of work role flexibility (of middle managers) is what we have termed 'tolerance of irrational authority.'" Management-oriented types can apparently justify wide deviations in the authority exercised by their superiors, including "an ability to relate oneself to a superior whose decisions may not appear sound."<sup>25</sup>

### Functional Authority

According to Koontz and O'Donnell, functional authority is that power "which an individual or department may have delegated to it over specified processes, practices, policies, or other matters relating to activities undertaken by personnel in departments other than its own."<sup>26</sup> The definition carries a "staff" connotation but is not as restricted. Functional authority may be exercised by line or staff.

Functional authority has proponents enough to classify it as an approach.

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<sup>24</sup>Dalton, Barnes, and Zaleznik, The Distribution of Authority in Formal Organizations, passim, pp. 48-52.

<sup>25</sup>R. Stagner, "Attitude Towards Authority," Journal of Social Psychology, Volume 40 (November, 1954), p. 210.

<sup>26</sup>Koontz and O'Donnell, Principles of Management, p. 301.



Proponents of the functional approach find authority only in the particular job to be done. As Follett explained: "I do not think that a president should have any more authority than goes with his function. . . . Authority belongs to the job and stays with the job."<sup>27</sup> More contemporary statements of this point of view are likely to put matters in less personal terms than did Follett. Such a formulation might note that authority increasingly inheres in "the situation," and individuals as commonly respond to its demands as to an order of some formal superior.<sup>28</sup>

### Nonfinancial Incentives

The increasing value for the modern organization to fit the image of a family of cooperating individuals has led to an emphasis on "democratic relations" within the field. This has led to a fundamental dilemma of discovering how the exercise of authority and the maintenance of democratic relations between superior and subordinate could be achieved simultaneously. Robert Dubin has developed a number of terms to describe the various types of pay associated with this democratic relationship.

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<sup>27</sup>Mary Parker Follett, "The Illusion of Final Authority," in Readings in Management, ed. by Ernest Dale (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1965), p. 385.

<sup>28</sup>Peter M. Blau and J. Richard Scott, Formal Organizations (San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Co., 1962), pp. 173-177.



### Privilege Pay

"Privilege pay, like job satisfaction, is essentially a psychic reward. Both result in a feeling or attitude of well-being or pleasure."<sup>29</sup> Privilege pay is basically a measure of the freedom of interaction between superiors and their subordinates; the superior being the initiator of such interaction.

### Power Pay

"Power pay is the reward conferred on a person by making his tasks more important in the organization."<sup>30</sup> Job enlargement and work enrichment are two other widely used terms almost synonymous with Dubin's power pay.

### Authority Pay

Authority pay is the promotion to a position of greater authority and according to Dubin is "the most generally used of the nonfinancial incentives."<sup>31</sup> It is not an uncommon occurrence in industry to encounter supervisors who make even less money than some of their subordinates.

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<sup>29</sup>Robert Dubin, Human Relations in Administration (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1961), p. 280

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., p. 301.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.





### Status Pay

Status pay is the increased value that management places upon employees in the form of some public acknowledgment made by management. This status is not to be confused with status accorded by the primary group at work.

"Status pay is the 'cheapest' form of payoff for the organization."<sup>32</sup>

### Equalization of Authority

The trend in modern corporate organizations has been, as mentioned above, towards a more "democratic" relationship within the organization. Dalton, Barnes, and Zaleznik<sup>33</sup> have referred to this process as the equalization of authority. Equalization consists of any attempt to alter the proportional distributions of authority so that a relative shift occurs in favor of low ranking members of the hierarchy. The methodology of such a shift may be structural or ideological. Structural shifts are intended to increase organizational effectiveness through greater participation and work involvement. Ideological shifts are distinguishable by their comprehensiveness and rationale; an example being the Scanlon Plan.

Such a trend is most evident in current literature as substantiated by the works of Bernard Baum,<sup>34</sup> and the impact discussed is evidenced in

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<sup>32</sup>Ibid., p. 303.

<sup>33</sup>Dalton, Barnes, and Zaleznik, The Distribution of Authority in Formal Organizations, pp. 53-55.

<sup>34</sup>Bernard H. Baum, Decentralization of Authority in a Bureaucracy (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1961).



articles like that by David Mechanic where he explores the various factors that account for power of lower participants in complex organizations.<sup>35</sup>

### The Fixed-Pie, Zero-Sum Conflict

A conflict has arisen in the conceptualization of the equalization trend. The best illustration of the conflict is the different viewpoints of the co-authors Dalton, Barnes, and Zaleznik.<sup>36</sup> The assumption of a fixed sum of power and authority in an organization as expressed by Zaleznik was not shared by the other authors. The distinction to be made is between the "absolute" and "relative" amounts of power and authority. Dalton and Barnes assert that as an organization moves toward clearer specifications and greater acceptance of differentiated roles, it is not only possible but probable that the total amount of authority will expand.

The argument has been prevalent recently as exemplified by assertions by Tannenbaum,<sup>37</sup> and Walton and McKersie<sup>38</sup> that the possibility of both fixed-pie and variable-pie conditions exist. The roots, however, go back at least as far as Max Weber who used the "zero-sum" concept in his writing.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>35</sup>David Mechanic, "Sources of Power of Lower Participants in Complex Organizations," Administrative Science Quarterly, December, 1962, pp. 349-362.

<sup>36</sup>Dalton, Barnes, and Zaleznik, The Distribution of Authority in Formal Organizations.

<sup>37</sup>Arnold S. Tannenbaum, Control in Organizations (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1968).

<sup>38</sup>Richard E. Walton and Robert B. McKersie, A Behavioral Theory of Labor Relations (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1965).

<sup>39</sup>Weber, Economy and Society.



## Authority Leakage

Another interesting spillover of this same trend has been pointed out by Anthony Downs.

Since some leakage of authority usually occurs whenever orders pass down through any level of hierarchy, such leakage tends to become cumulative when many levels are involved. . . . For example, assume that official A issues a general order to B<sub>1</sub>. B<sub>1</sub>'s own goals indicate that his commands to his subordinates should embody 90 per cent of what he believes A actually had in mind. Perhaps B<sub>1</sub> believes a slight distortion of the order can greatly benefit him personally (or his part of the bureau if he is an advocate). Perhaps 100 per cent execution of the order would require too much effort (if he is a conserver). . . . B<sub>1</sub> may not even be conscious of causing distortion; rather he may view his interpretation as clearly the best one for the bureau.

There are very few orders so precise and unequivocal that they cannot be distorted by a factor of 10 per cent; consequently B<sub>1</sub>'s orders to his C-level subordinates embody only 90 per cent of what A originally desired.<sup>40</sup>

As this process continues downward through successive levels the outcome is easily imagined. Control devices must be used to help alleviate such problems.

### Methods of Analysis

#### Sources of Authority

One of the most common methods of analysis of authority is by analyzing the various sources.) Koontz and O'Donnell provide an excellent illustration of

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<sup>40</sup>Downs, Inside Bureaucracy, pp. 134-135.



this method. They classify the sources into three areas. The formal authority theory that they offer is almost synonymous with the classical concept presented in Chapter II. Their second source, the acceptance theory, also parallels the analysis of this thesis. Koontz and O'Donnell, however, provide a third classification, the competence theory. More closely related to the acceptance theory than the formal theory, "is the belief that authority is generated by personal qualities of technical competence."<sup>41</sup> Under this heading is the individual who has made, in effect, subordinates of others through sheer force of personality. However, it appears to this writer that the competence theory is but a hybrid of charismatic and some sort of acceptance.

A slight variation of Koontz and O'Donnell's three sources is offered by Singhvi.<sup>42</sup> He offers the formal theory and acceptance theory as the first two but deviates on his third possible source with a contractual theory of authority. According to this theory, the authority of the manager has its source in the contract, written or implied, between the employer and the employee. The contract is the source of the manager's right to give orders and his right to expect compliance. (In this thesis the contract theory is considered to be encompassed by the acceptance theory.)

### How Authority Is Acquired

Members of a group or organization who possess authority may acquire it either through ascription, appointment, or personal achievement. The

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<sup>41</sup>Koontz and O'Donnell, Principles of Management, p. 63.

<sup>42</sup>Singhvi, "Authority and Power," pp. 65-66.





ascribed leader possesses his authority through divine right or traditional decree. Just as members of a group in such a case have nothing to say about the appointment, neither can they change it. The differences between appointed and earned authority stem from the fact that appointed leaders must usually earn authority. Also earned leaders must often acquire appointment in order to legitimize their authority.<sup>43</sup>

### Peabody's Perceptions

Robert L. Peabody argues that the bases of formal authority--legitimacy and position--need to be distinguished from sources of functional authority--technical competence and human relations skills--which support and often compete with formal authority. Rather than attempt an exhaustive review of the literature he drew upon five contributors to the study of authority--Max Weber, Lyndall F. Urwick, Herbert A. Simon, Warren G. Bennis, and Robert V. Presthus. His perception of the relationship of their views to his own is illustrated in Table 1.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>43</sup>Clovis R. Shepherd, Small Groups (San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Co., 1964); pp. 81-85.

<sup>44</sup>Robert A. Peabody, "Perceptions of Organizational Authority: A Comparative Analysis," Administrative Science Quarterly, March, 1962, p. 468.



TABLE 1

## THE BASES OF AUTHORITY

	FORMAL AUTHORITY		FUNCTIONAL AUTHORITY	
	Legitimacy	Position	Competence	Person
Weber	Legal Legal Order	Hierarchical office	Rational authority Technical knowledge, experience	Traditional authority Charismatic authority
Urwick	.	Formal, conferred by the organization	Technical, implicit in special knowledge or skill	Personnel conferred by seniority or popularity
Simon	Authority of legitimacy, social approval	Authority of sanctions	Authority of confidence (technical competence)	Techniques of "persuasion" (as distinct authority)
Bennis	.	Role incumbency	Knowledge of performance criteria	Knowledge of the human aspect of administration
Presthus	Generalized deference toward authority	Formal role or position	Technical expertise	Rapport with subordinates, ability to mediate individual needs

SOURCE: Robert A. Peabody, "Perceptions of Organizational Authority," Administrative Science Quarterly, March, 1962, p. 468.



## The Overlay Concept

Robert T. Golembiewski has constructed a conceptual approach to authoritative relations in organizations that permits a reasonable interpretation of existing research. Its focus is upon several concepts covered in this thesis and common in the study of authority. They are most often treated as being more or less mutually exclusive but may also be usefully considered as interacting overlays of authoritative relations. The "traditional" concept is presented herein as the classical concept; the "functional" concept was discussed as functional authority; and his "behaviorial" concept parallels the acceptance concept of Chapter II. A fourth concept, the "integrative," includes all three emphases under one conceptual roof.

The first three concepts, by themselves, are not adequate to encompass all significant authoritative relations in organizations, each taps an important aspect of such relations. The integrative concept suffers from an opposite fault; its content is broad and unspecific and facilitates a survey of authoritative relations but does not isolate those aspects that are descriptively significant.<sup>45</sup>

### Reconciliation of Classical and Acceptance

As is evidenced in the previous discussions the concept of authority is as open to conflict as any in the literature on organizations. A comprehensive

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<sup>45</sup>Robert T. Golembiewski, "Authority as a Problem in Overlays," Administrative Science Quarterly, June, 1964, pp. 26-27.



understanding of authority and its rationale still remains elusive.) The following is an attempt to trace the roots of this ambiguity.

We can see the acceptance concept as offering reconciliation with the current human relations and behavioral science studies. Proponents argue that the classical writers are astute enough to recognize to some extent that to be operative, the right of authority must be accepted, but the emphasis is upon the wrong aspect. Proponents of the classical concept, on the other hand, describe the acceptance theorists as "hedonistic."<sup>46</sup> They claim that the use of authority is much more comprehensive than merely to secure the compliance of subordinates.

This writer agrees that there are definitely different points of emphasis; the acceptance concept emphasizes actual behavior, the classical concept--the way people ought to act. Why, however, must these differences be incompatible? A thoroughly comprehensive understanding must, it seems, include both the normative and descriptive views. ] Sure, the concepts have different emphases; they have different orientations. The end result is that they are complementary. It is interesting to note that the "fathers" of the two basic concepts go to great lengths to reconcile the differences<sup>47</sup> and to establish the fact that their ideas are non-exhaustive.<sup>48</sup> Another approach to reconciling the two concepts would be

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<sup>46</sup>Koontz and O'Donnell, Principles of Management, p. 62.

<sup>47</sup>Barnard, The Functions of the Executive, pp. 181-184.

<sup>48</sup>Weber, Economy and Society, p. 216.





to consider that a right to act which is delegated from the top must be met with the willingness and capacity to act which flows from below.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>49</sup>Massie, Essentials of Management, p. 76.



## CHAPTER V

### ATTITUDES, IMPLEMENTATION, AND IMPLICATIONS

At this juncture the exploration of authority will be extended by considering the implementation techniques of the newer and future-directed approaches to authority and its roles in modern organization. In arriving at this point, a number of incongruencies have been uncovered, and in most cases an attempt made to reconcile them. Additional problems will be seen in the implementation section and some of the associated implications for future enterprises will be exposed. Before moving on, however, one last bit of background must be provided in order to be as all-inclusive as possible. The attitudes of a people and society exert an untold amount of pressure on the organizational and institutional nuances of authority. "It is changes in people that change the organization--not changes in the formal chart of organization."<sup>1</sup> A look at the attitudes of the American people with an attempt to create a feeling for the direction of change of those attitudes is deemed apropos.

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<sup>1</sup>Kenneth E. Cook, "The Coming Evolution in Management Concepts," SAM Advanced Management Journal, Vol. 35, No. 2 (April, 1970), p. 60.



Attitudes on the Nature of Authority

The attitudes of the American people are really ambivalent, according to Charles Hendel. We oscillate between two moods with respect to authority, one resentful, one welcoming. When it appears as an unlimited remote power over which we seem to have little or no control ourselves and to which we cannot gain access even to put in our word and register our grievance, we envisage authority as evil. If it is a sort of home rule, an assigned authority for a specific task to be performed and one of general benefit, we accept such authority without concern.<sup>2</sup>

Homans asserts that today sons are far more resentful of the father's authority than they were in the past, even though the father's authority has declined. "This is no paradox; the two facts follow from one another. Authority is resented when it is exercised rarely and in circumstances in which the need for authority is not obvious."<sup>3</sup>

The American workingman today probably has a somewhat narrower zone of acceptance, so far as the employer's instructions are concerned, than his father had. In part, this may be due to his stronger bargaining position, or conversely, the weaker sanctions of the employer; but there is probably also present here a more fundamental change in social attitudes as to what it is "proper" for an employer to ask an employee to do. This

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<sup>2</sup>Charles W. Hendel, "An Exploration of the Nature of Authority," in Authority, ed. by Friedrich, p.5.

<sup>3</sup>Homans, The Human Group, p.277.



changed attitude is reflected in social legislation limiting the terms of the employment contract.<sup>4</sup>

In an article on authority in the economics and business professions, Royall Brandis typified the trend developed in the last two paragraphs. Speaking of powerful, all-knowing personalities he said: "It appears to me that we are freer of such individual authority today than we were in almost any period of the last two centuries. At least, I am aware of no figure to whom all, or nearly all of the profession pay unquestioned obedience."<sup>5</sup>

V.A. Thompson claims a definite decline of the charisma in modern life. To him "the decline of the propensity to be impressed by the charismatic threatens the legitimacy of hierarchical positions."<sup>6</sup> Gone are most of the charismatic owner-manager entrepreneurs of yesterday, and this loss of charismatic leadership threatens the power of businessmen in our society. These same trends are mirrored in numerous articles of the literature of late.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Simon, Administrative Behavior, pp. 130-133.

<sup>5</sup>Royall Brandis, "On the Noxious Influence of Authority," The Quarterly Review of Economics and Business (Autumn, 1967), p. 41.

<sup>6</sup>Victor A. Thompson, Modern Organization (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1964), p. 114.

<sup>7</sup>For example see "The Pepsi Generation," Iron Age, May 9, 1968, p. 25.





### Implementation

The primary factor to be considered by an organization in the implementation of a "formal" authority structure is not so much the theoretical aspects but the manner in which it is to be manifested in that particular organization. Modern organization theory includes approaches that make different assumptions about the nature of man. It is therefore, not surprising that these approaches reach conflicting conclusions. One assumption often made concerns the rationality of man and the organization. This was discussed at some length in the last chapter. The question, who is to say what "rationality in the strict sense" is, often is overlooked. Humans cannot be counted on to necessarily act rationally, or irrationally as a matter of fact.<sup>8</sup> The point of this discussion is best made by George Homans. He contends that it is more important to have some system and confidence in carrying it out than to have the best system in the world and anxiety in its implementation.<sup>9</sup>

An important factor in the ability of an organization to achieve its goals is its authority structure. If goals and authority structure are

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<sup>8</sup> Dalton, Barnes, and Zaleznik, The Distribution of Authority in Formal Organizations, p. 51.

<sup>9</sup> Homans, The Human Group, p. 278.



incompatible, goals may be modified to the extent that means become parts of the goals themselves. Several organizational assumptions, such as that staff authority is generally subordinated to line authority, can be analyzed in different kinds of organizations to show that, in practice, they must be modified according to the major goals of the organization. In professional organizations, for example, traditional line and staff concepts must be reversed, since the staff "experts" are carrying out the major goal activity, while the "line" plays a service role.<sup>10</sup>

The combination in modern bureaucracy of technological specialization and the older institution of hierarchy has produced an organizationally determined pattern of conflict in modern organization caused ultimately by the growing gap between authority and perceptions of technical needs, these two elements of organization being largely now in the hands of two separate sets of officials. Specifically, intraorganizational conflict, to the extent it is organizationally determined, is a function of (1) disagreement over the necessity of authoritatively created interdependence, (2) growing disparity between rights and abilities, (3) scalar status violations involved in technologically created interdependencies, and (4) differentiation of values and reality perceptions brought about by the controls over interpersonal

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<sup>10</sup>Amitai Etzioni, "Authority Structure and Organizational Effectiveness," Administrative Science Quarterly, June, 1952, pp. 43-67.



communications exercised by the hierarchical system, the status system, and the technical system (specialization).<sup>11</sup>

The exercise of authority in an organization should not be confused with authoritarianism.<sup>12</sup> Organizations can have a democratic structure in which the source of legislative power is vested in the membership and the executive directives are an implementation of the wishes of the majority. Members still obey the rules. In an authoritarian system, however, legislative and executive systems are under the control of the top echelons.

According to Koontz and O'Donnell, whether authority should be concentrated or dispersed throughout the organization is a question not so much of "what kind" as of "how much" authority. "Decentralization of authority is a fundamental phase of delegation; to the extent that authority is not delegated, it is centralized." They contend that absolute centralization in one person is conceivable, but that it implies no subordinate managers and therefore no structured organization. Offered on the other hand, is absolute decentralization as non conceivable, for to do so a manager would have to delegate all of his authority. His status as manager would cease, his position would be eliminated, and there would be no organization. "Consequently, it can be said that some decentralization characterizes all organizations."<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>Thompson, Modern Organization, passim, Chapters III and IV.

<sup>12</sup>Katz and Kahn, The Social Psychology of Organizations, p. 221.

<sup>13</sup>Koontz and O'Donnell, Principles of Management, p. 349.



Another position, that has not been touched upon, falling in the implementation category is that of the "credibility gap." No matter how timely, how important, or how relevant a management's actions are towards its authority structure, if they are not believable their effectiveness will be lost. This relates to having a system and having confidence in it. All members of the organization must have confidence in the system. Just how much of the modern theoretical approaches are being implemented is open to serious question--and that question will only be answered in the future. However, a recent study of top management development by the American Institutes for Research in the Behavioral Sciences concluded: "There is a wealth of prior statements in the literature about what companies are doing, based on what they think they are doing. But there is often a disparity between this and what is actually being done." "A great many companies," says Peter Drucker, "have magnificent personnel policies on paper, and that is all they have." And as one middle-manager opined: "We hear a lot about theory Y management, and I'd like to see a little of it practiced around here." R. Alex MacKenzie portends that to survive in the future, management must be effective. To be effective, it must be credible. Its actions must conform to its words.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>R. Alex MacKenzie, "The Credibility Gap in Management," Management Revision, November, 1969, pp. 2-8.





### Approaches for the Future

Now a look at a few of the organizational approaches that are available in the literature and are future oriented. This is not to say that the ones presented here are mutually exclusive or that they are in any way exhaustive. They do, however, provide a great deal of insight with which to extend the prognosis in the next and final section.

#### Matrix Organization

One of the theories discussed previously in this thesis was "unity of command." Matrix management is in primary conflict with the premises of "unity of command," or "one man, one boss." As mentioned in the section on "Unity of Command," straying from such a concept may provide the lesser of two evils. The greater evil emanates from the necessary increasing complexities of modern organizations.

Properly applied, a matrix structure can do wonders to improve efficiency and the quality of a company's product or service. Vertical reporting lines are criss-crossing with solid horizontal ones to provide what is known as matrix, grid, or latticework patterns in the organization chart. Managers find they have to share control over their workers with others.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>Steven Ludwig, "The Move to Matrix Management," Management Review, June, 1970, pp. 60-64.



According to Massie, the matrix approach concentrates on three crucial variables:

- (1) the intrinsic properties of the task along a continuum from repetitive to unique,
- (2) the personality (norms and aspirations) and the competence (expertise) of the personnel within a unit, and
- (3) the institutional and/or historical circumstances associated with the unit.<sup>16</sup>

This approach identifies subsystems of a complex organization, each with its appropriate strategy of planning, control, rewards, and boundary negotiations. These subsystems are viewed along a continuum from dependence on hierarchical concepts to autonomous units or projects.<sup>17</sup>

The path to matrix organization is strewn with pitfalls and there are a number of problems that must be faced before any company tries a grid structure.

1. Above all, lines of authority must be set out absolutely clear. Those lines will be criss-crossing, and any fuzziness will result in ambiguities and unhealthy conflict and chaos.
2. A major education effort is needed. The managers must fully understand the new rules of the game, so that they will not feel their authority is threatened. Similarly, rank-and-file employees must be taught how to function with two--or more--bosses.
3. Extra bookkeeping may be in order to reconcile the lines of authority on a cost-center basis.
4. The grid is brought in to handle unhealthy conflict. In turn, though, it may touch off healthy conflict, and a company must be ready to handle it.
5. Decision-making may be slowed down a bit.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Massie, Essentials of Management, p. 79.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>Ludwig, "The Move to Matrix Management," p. 64.



Robert House gives some insight as to how management may handle some of these problems. If the manager is wise, he will be alert to the demands imposed on his subordinates, offer them the support of his authority and position, and his knowledge and experience in resolving conflict. He must review conflicting demands frequently for they will change frequently.<sup>19</sup>

Frequent consultation with subordinates, open communication between organizational levels, joint problem-solving meetings, and management by objectives are all means to detect the existence of role conflict. Conflict can be prevented by providing policies to guide those who find themselves in a potential conflict situation. Conflict can also be prevented by temporal and spatial separation. Finally, the manager might hold frequent communication and review meetings with those whose positions are likely to expose them to role conflict.

Matrix management, by all indications, seems quite new and revolutionary. It has been tried and is presently in use in some progressive organizations today, e.g., Lockheed Aircraft Corporation, International Telephone and Telegraph Corporation, Caterpillar Tractor Company, Inc., and others.<sup>20</sup> The concept, however, is not necessarily entirely new. It is

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<sup>19</sup>House, "Role Conflict and Multiple Authority in Complex Organizations," p. 59.

<sup>20</sup>Ludwig, "The Move to Matrix Management," p. 61.



interesting to note that in 1926, Mary Parker Follett spoke of the solution to authority role conflicts by "a system of cross-functioning," where she called for a horizontal authority network as well as the vertical structure.<sup>21</sup>

### The Functional-Teamwork Concept

The functional-teamwork concept was conceived by Gerald Frisch as an alternative to line-staff. He postulates that a practical organizational system requires a natural division of responsibility, and then demands that each function cooperate with every other function in a team effort aimed at achieving the total corporate objectives.

In terms of functions, the functional-teamwork concept will:

Cover all necessary tasks and give appropriate weight and authority to each.

Achieve a logical--rather than an arbitrary--separation among these functions.

Give "specialization with honor" to the people who head these functions, relegating to none the sterility of a staff position.<sup>22</sup>

Frisch claims for the approach an attainment of cooperation on a day-to-day, interfunctional basis. It will set up deliberate conflict situations wherein the best economic balance between functions can be achieved. Maximum cooperation and coordination will be encouraged at the lowest practical

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<sup>21</sup>Follett, "The Illusion of Final Authority," p. 386.

<sup>22</sup>Gerald G. Frisch, "Line-Staff is Obsolete," Harvard Business Review, September-October, 1961, p. 73.





hierarchical level within the functions, and only major divergences will be referred to top management for resolution. "Finally, it will, through a double check-and-balance system, force teamwork, not for its own sake, but to best achieve the overall objectives of the total organization."<sup>23</sup>

### The Contingency Theory

The theoretical assumptions of the contingency theory emphasize that the appropriate pattern of organization is "contingent" on the nature of the work to be done and on the particular needs of the people involved, i. e., the fit between task, organization, and people. More specifically the assumptions state that people bring varying patterns of needs into the work organization, but one central need is to achieve a sense of competence. This sense of competence may, in turn, be fulfilled in different ways in different people--depending on their individual need structure. Competence motivation is most likely to be fulfilled when there is a fit between task and organization. And even though a competence goal is reached by an individual, the need still exists in a new, higher-level goal.

While there is a need to further investigate how people who work in different settings differ in their psychological makeup, Morse and Lorsch contend that one important implication of the contingency theory is "that we

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 74.



must not only seek a fit between organization and task, but also between task and people and between people and organization."<sup>24</sup>

### Existential Pragmatism

Gordon Lippitt feels that an existential pragmatism, taking into account--as the situation exists at the present moment--the interdependent nature of renewal for individuals, groups, organizations, and environment, is the appropriate managerial response for the viable organization of tomorrow.<sup>25</sup>

Warren Bennis provides, perhaps, the best background for such a belief in a listing of ideas pertinent to the growth of behavioral science in organizational thought:

Man does not react solely on the basis of economic gain.

Man has a hierarchy of needs which change over time toward social and self-actualization and away from basic physical-economic efforts.

Man reacts in unanticipated ways to different forms of leadership.

Man's interpersonal relationships are important, have regularities, are real in their effects, and cannot be subsumed or understood through conventional theory.

Interpersonal relationships affect organizational effectiveness.

Interpersonal relationships cannot be outlawed or ignored. If they are, they go underground and turn up in the damndest places.

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<sup>24</sup>John J. Morse and Jay W. Lorsch, "Beyond Theory Y," Harvard Business Review, May-June, 1970, p. 68.

<sup>25</sup>Gordon L. Lippitt, Organization Renewal (New York: Meredith Corporation, 1969), pp. 16-17.



Groups can establish and enforce norms on their membership. These norms may or may not be congruent with management goals.

Morale is a complex of variables and not necessarily correlated to productivity.

Communication gets distorted, particularly as it goes up the hierarchy.

The validity and frequency of upward communications appears to be dependent upon the degree of interpersonal trust between superior and subordinate, the degree of power held by the subordinate, and the degree of the subordinates ambition.

The formal organization chart only rarely, if ever, resembles the power structure.

Bureaucratic theory and practice do not possess adequate means for resolving conflict between ranks and between functional groups.

Bureaucracy has no adequate juridicial process to protect its incumbents.

The control and authority systems of bureaucracy do not work.

Bureaucracy cannot assimilate the influx of new technology or new professionals entering the organization.

Bureaucracy does not adequately account or allow for personal growth of mature personalities.

Bureaucracy seems unable to cope with rapid, unprogrammed changes.<sup>26</sup>

The "E" Concept, as Lippitt has entitled existential pragmatism, as a response pattern is not intended to imply that just any response which works is adequate. On the contrary, it implies a professional response based upon effective diagnosis by the manager of the situational forces and persons in the situation. The situation will encompass environmental forces, including the nature of the problem, organizational requirements, and the interrelationship of multiple forces.

The underlying assumption of "Concept E" management is that the managerial response will be appropriate when it solves the problem situation, at the same time strengthening the human resources and the

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<sup>26</sup>Warren G. Bennis, Changing Organizations (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1966), pp. 185-186.





process of interfacing, and when it contributes to the growth of the organization while responding realistically to the external environment.<sup>27</sup>

### Prognosis

As a finale the literature will again be utilized to see what some of the scholars, academicians, and practitioners forecast for the future of organization as concerns the authority structure and its ramifications in the various organization roles.

#### Leavitt and Whisler

Though written thirteen years ago, authors Leavitt and Whisler forecast that a new technology would dominate the managerial scene by the 1980's. This new discipline, called informational technology, included techniques for processing large amounts of information rapidly. The Leavitt and Whisler prognostications were along certain lines: (1) Information technology should move the boundry between planning and performance upward. Just as planning was taken from the hourly worker and given to the industrial engineer, it would soon be taken from a number of middle managers and given to operations researchers and organization analysts. (2) Large industries will re-centralize as opposed to current trends to decentralize. (3) Radical reorganization of middle management levels will

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<sup>27</sup>Lippitt, Organizational Renewal, p. 19.





occur because the new information technology will force a split between those jobs requiring creativity and those requiring less autonomy and skill.

(4) The line separating top management from middle management will be more clear and impenetrable than ever before.<sup>28</sup>

### Rensis Likert

Likert reviewed in outline form what he believed the general character of an organization would be if it were based upon a full application of theory. A summary of that review:

An organization should be outstanding in its performance if it has competent personnel, if it has leadership which develops highly effective groups and used the overlapping group form of structure, and if it achieves effective communication and influence, decentralized and coordinated decision-making, and high performance goals coupled with high motivation. We should expect such an organization to have high productivity; products of high quality; low costs; low turnover and absence; high capacity to adapt effectively to change; a high degree of enthusiasm and satisfaction on the part of its employees, customers, and stockholders; and good relations with unions. In short, the theoretical model called for by the newer theory appears to be an ideal organization. Existing organization can move toward this model with benefit to all. This appears to be the direction in which the high-producing managers are, in fact, moving.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>Harold J. Leavitt and Thomas L. Whisler, "Management in the 1980's," Harvard Business Review, November-December, 1958, pp. 41-48.

<sup>29</sup>Rensis Likert, New Patterns of Management (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1961), p. 240.



### A Forecast by Bennis

Warren Bennis considers the environment of the future to feature turbulence instead of stability, interdependence rather than competition, and large vice small enterprises. He sees two characteristics of the future population as more educated and more mobile in relation to jobs. People will be shifted from job to job and even from employer to employer with much less fuss than we are accustomed to. Due to the increased educational level people will be more intellectually committed to their jobs and will probably require more involvement, participation, and autonomy in their work. Tasks and goals of the firm will change with an emphasis toward intellect instead of muscle. "The tasks . . . will be more technical, complicated, and unprogrammed. . . . Essentially, they will call for the collaboration of specialists in a project form of organization."<sup>30</sup> Organizational structure will be directed towards temporary systems organized around problems-to-be-solved. Differentiation will become more flexible with skill and training as the primary factors. Jobs in the future should become more involving.

. . . I think the future I describe is far from a utopian or a necessarily "happy" one. Coping with rapid change, living in temporary systems, and setting up (in quickstep time) meaningful relations--and then breaking them--all augur strains and tensions. Learning how to live with ambiguity and to be self-directing will be the task of education and the goal of maturity.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>Bennis, Changing Organizations, p. 11.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., p. 14.



### An Eclectic Approach

According to Bergey and Slover, though the world will be changing at a frantic pace, the primary ingredient for management success will still be sound judgement. The future manager will be a catalyst that will integrate information technology with the human resources available. He will be better grounded in the humanities. Computer specialists will not rise to constitute a new managerial elite. Government and the business community will work even more closely together. Managers will be formally trained professionals who will spend the majority of their time contemplating the long range potential of their organizations. Behavioral patterns of people will become increasingly predictable, selection will become more objective, and organizational structure will become more flexible. Profit will still be the primary motivating force in business.<sup>32</sup>

Kenneth E. Cook

Cook sees the trends of today as pointing toward economic and social equality. There will be an increased tolerance for individual differences. The definition of success will change, with the challenge to men being against his own potential and capacities not against other men. Methods of

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<sup>32</sup>John M. Bergey and Robert C. Slover, "Administration in the 1980's," SAM Advanced Management Journal, Volume 34, Number 2 (April, 1969), pp. 31-32.





inducement and punishment will change drastically. Decision-making will depend more upon concensus. Future ages will be taught increased sensitivity for other men, but in spite of this, there will be less emotionalism.<sup>33</sup>

### Summary

Where does all this leave us? The contemporary writers seem to agree that a value based democratic management will prevail. Harold Koontz submits that the key to the successful future manager will be to subscribe to this theory while still preserving the "carrot and the stick" approach.<sup>34</sup> There are still some pessimistic resolutions exemplified by the "bureaucratic personality,"<sup>35</sup> but, all in all, the outlook is not gloomy. The manager of the future will be coping with increase sophistication in all aspects of managing. "The rapidity of change truly puts management's skills to the acid test."<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>33</sup>Cook, "The Coming Evolution in Management Concepts, " pp. 58-62.

<sup>34</sup>Harold Koontz, "Management and Challenges of the Future, " Advanced Management Journal, Volume 33, Number 1 (January, 1968), pp. 24-25.

<sup>35</sup>R.N. McMurray, "The Case for Benevolent Autocracy, " Harvard Business Review, January-February, 1950, p. 81.

<sup>36</sup>"That Management Gap--It's Worldwide, " Iron Age, October 9, 1968, p. 25.





## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSIONS

This chapter will direct itself to the individual research questions of the thesis with the drawing of such inferences as the preceding materials allow. The flow will then lead to implications in terms of the developmental study of authority and finally, a look at some further areas for research.

#### Basic Concepts

Initially, a look was taken at the various definitions of authority. At no time was an attempt made to specify a particular definition for use in this study. Resultantly, with no exact definition, a certain circularity of explanation prevailed. The reason for this lack of exact definition lies in the answer to the following question. Is such a crutch as a precise definition needed to understand a theory of the comprehensiveness of authority? It is the author's contention that to require a precise, all-encompassing definition could be an unnecessary constraint.

The basic concepts of authority were presented early in the paper. It is appropriate to now provide a short summation and reconciliation of the



classical and acceptance concepts. The acceptance concept usefully directs the attention of managers to the fact that they perform their functions in an interdependent relationship with their subordinates. This is not, as has been shown, a new idea. It was part of the structure of such traditionally authoritative systems as feudalism and the master-servant relationship, and is included in classical writings on business management. Acceptance of authority is viewed by the classical concept as a required response from properly functioning subordinates. The acceptance concept, in contrast, accords it a legitimate and principle point in the process of authority.

Both concepts of authority may very well be simply attempts to develop an ideology interpreting the necessary exercise of authority in a favorable light. The different concepts and views of authority are not really incompatible, but rather, are mutually dependent on and complementary to each other for a thorough, comprehensive understanding of the subject.

### Congruency

Dalton, Barnes, and Zaleznik have listed what they believe to be the principle sources of ambiguity in authority as a concept and in its practical extensions.

1. The prevalence in using authority interchangeably as a structural and dynamic variable. As a structural variable the concept of authority yields certain clarifications about different types of authority inherent in the organization and related to the wider social organization. As a dynamic variable the term authority often refers to the means by which changes in attitudes and behavior occur.



2. The tendency to ignore the fact that the uses of authority involve individual thought and action. The theory of authority, therefore, if treated solely as a sociological issue, will overlook the psychological aspects of individual action and reaction to organization structure.

3. The absence of clarity in considering authority in both its quantitative and its qualitative aspects. There is an amount of authority subject to distribution in an organization, but there are also different types of authority imbedded in the structure. Alteration in the authority structure may change either or both the quantitative distribution and the type of authority which has primacy in the minds of members of the organization.

4. The readiness to accept implicit definitions of rationality in organizational actions while overlooking the idea that rationality and irrationality are not paired opposites but rather are subject to interpretation at the levels of the organization, the group, and the individual. The question of rationality in authority is complicated by the fact that the attempt to change the organization structure involves the uses of authority identified with the office and person of the chief executive. The direction of change may therefore evoke conflicts of interest which involve equally rational but opposing ends and control of means.

5. The displacement of normative concerns into the language of investigation and inquiry. Many writers and practitioners are really interested in changing organization or management as their first order of business. Currently, the direction of change is toward shifting authority from the top to the bottom of the organization. While this concern for equalizing authority may be a good thing, the problem for investigators is to remain objectively neutral on types of changes and their outcomes.<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, it can be said that there is not an incongruency among the various concepts so much as there is a lack of awareness, understanding, and knowledge of those concepts. This contention has been expounded upon by James L. Centner in a recently published article.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Dalton, Barnes, and Zaleznik, The Distribution of Authority in Formal Organizations, pp. 35-36.

<sup>2</sup>James L. Centner, "Cry Gap! Gap! --When There Is No Gap," SAM Advanced Management Journal, Volume 34, Number 4 (October, 1969), pp. 66-71.





Correspondence

One of the problems of contemporary organization management lies in the focus on only a part of the theory of authority. The emphasis is on a more participative, less authoritative, structure. As we have seen in some of the more progressive approaches this is not necessarily the optimal solution.

People are no longer awed by authority. They have been more able to experience the feeling associated with such authority because they have been thrust into positions of authority themselves. Additional causal factors are advanced technology, specialization, and a higher level of education.

It would be fair to say that the problem of managing authority relations at the professional and managerial levels stems directly from the fact that the areas of compliance are few in number and precisely absent in those activities which occupy most of the manager's time and emotional energy. Instead he is dealing directly with a second set of problems, involving the significant commitments of men to their work and career.<sup>3</sup>

Most of the unrest today is centered in the college student population. This seems to be a result of the combination of youth and higher education. They are increasingly able to negotiate in their own individual "psychological" or "work" contracts.

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<sup>3</sup>Dalton, Barnes and Zaleznik, The Distribution of Authority in Formal Organizations, pp. 148-153.





Whether the new theoretical concepts cause corresponding change in the actions and attitudes prevalent in organization management or whether the effect is reversed will remain unanswered here, but it is a safe assumption to say that more subtle forms of persuasion and of gaining acquiescence will become evident.

### Future

In the preceding discussion on the correspondence between theory and action there has been an overlap with the final subsidiary question: "What is the future?" Organizations of the future will utilize groups in order to help stabilize the "zones of indifference." There will, however, remain the "unenlightened" manager or person in authority who will issue the order that will not or cannot be obeyed. Massie offers the following advice to managers:

The manager faced with actual problems today may question: "All right, so there is a great amount of research being conducted in organization theory, but what am I to do today in organizing and staffing my own organization?" The answer is that he must continue to perform his functions, using those basic ideas that seem to be most appropriate. He should look skeptically on both old cliches and new fads. Certainly, he should be prepared to accept new viewpoints and new concepts that help throw light on his problems. He can take heart in the fact that numerous disciplines are continually offering valuable new help.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Massie, Essentials of Management, p. 81.



### The Effect of New Conceptions

A complete answer to the primary research question--How are the new conceptions of authority affecting the authoritative structure of contemporary organization management?--would still be, at this point, a task of great magnitude. Considerable insight into authority in the bureaucratic structure of organization management has been offered, both explicitly and implicitly, in addressing and, at least, partially answering the several subsidiary questions. An additional point to be made at this time is that the new ideas on authority have not necessarily led to new concepts. There has been a slender thread of thought purposely strewn throughout this thesis on the delineation between the act of conceiving, as in conception, and a complex of characters or general notion in the end product, as in a concept.

### Implications For Developmental Study

An emphasis on semantics was made in the introduction and second chapter. With an eye on the developmental study of authority structures and management techniques such an emphasis is again in order. Pleas have been made again and again by leaders in the field for semantic sanity.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>See for example Lyndall F. Urwick, "Are the Classics Really Out Of Date?" SAM Advanced Management Journal, Vol. 34, No. 3 (July, 1969), pp. 4-12; and, Harold Koontz, "The Management Theory Jungle," Management: A Book of Readings, ed. by Harold Koontz and Cyril O'Donnell (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964), pp. 8-17.



Problems concerning semantics will probably continue. This is not, however, a bad omen as long as there is periodic review to see where the state-of-the-art is, to judge where it's been, and to direct efforts towards an objective. Semantics is the key to comprehensive understanding of sophisticated concepts.

It has been said, that "the very nature of the formal relationship through which authority is administered is basically ego-protecting."<sup>6</sup> There are many ways by which an individual may assert his individuality and retain his judgement of himself as competent. This "ego-protecting" nature of authority may provide a foundation for future study.)

#### Further Areas For Research

The theory of organization management is developing rapidly. It is being viewed, from a broad perspective, as a system of human interactions, but also it is being studied in minute detail and under rigorously controlled conditions. Its chief promise is in the fact that all propositions are being subjected to empirical validation using the scientific method.

Authority theory is emotionally based--it is a combination of time, place, and all environmental circumstances present at the time in history.

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<sup>6</sup>Dorwin Cartwright, "Influence, Leadership, and Control," in Handbook of Organizations, ed. by James G. March (Chicago: Rand McNally and Company, 1965), pp. 1-47.



Authority relations need to be examined in a number of different types of organizations within one culture and in several cultural settings at different periods in order to develop generalizations as to what types of authority lead to what consequences for different kinds of organizations under a variety of stable and crisis situations.





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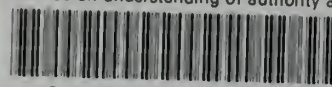
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